

**MINUTES
STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD
JANUARY 3, 2003**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Neil Bernstein, Chair
Robin Fortney
Kathy Gourley
Scott Moats
Timothy Sproul
Laura Jackson
Jeffrey Vonk

STAFF PRESENT

Daryl Howell
John Pearson

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Neil Bernstein called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM on January 3, 2003 in the Wallace State Office Building fourth floor conference room.

APPROVE AGENDA

Add: 5a Under agenda item 5 an aerial photo presentation on the following proposed preserves, Bannister McGregor Woods, Baylor Prairie, Delong Woods and Hartman Reserve.

Add: 5b Update on the Glenwood Hospital Study by Shirley Schermer.

Add: 7a Update on articles for the Conservationist Magazine

Add: 7b Obtaining GIS surveys of existing preserves

Add: 7c Biennium Report

***Motion was made by Tim Sproul to approve the agenda as amended.
Seconded by Robin Fortney. Motion carried unanimously.***

Approved as Amended

APPROVE MINUTES

Kathy Gourley asked that it be made clear that Jerome Thompson took on the management of the historic site in addition to his regular duties as Bureau Chief on page 12 at the bottom and that the spelling of LuAnn Becker be corrected in the third paragraph of page 17.

***Motion was made by Robin Fortney to approve the minutes as amended.
Seconded by Tim Sproul.***

Approved as Amended

SCENIC PRESERVES

Neil Bernstein said that the Board had received a proposal from Mark Ackelson from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation through email.

Mark Ackelson said the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation has worked closely with the State Preserves Advisory Board and have had the opportunity to add to and buffer some of the state preserves. He said although Iowa Code 465C identifies scenic preserves as a category, there have never been criteria developed for this. There are some very special landscapes in this state and it seems natural to begin looking ahead at giving preserves status to some of these areas. At the encouragement of a donor that has come forward with a particular area that he would like to have dedicated as a preserve, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation would like to propose a joint project with the Preserves Board to put together a team of experts to develop the criteria that will be brought back to the Preserves Board for consideration. He said they have developed a schedule of about fifteen months, which has been deliberately slowed it down to make it an interactive process with the Preserves Board. The action plan has twelve phases and would be co-facilitated by Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and a member of the Preserves Board. He said they have already talked to representatives from the National Park Service who is eager to help. They have recruited a person from the Scenic Byways Program of the Department of Transportation. They have had several conversations with staff from Iowa State University and have already recruited people from Keep Iowa Beautiful and Scenic America. They are now waiting for a go ahead from the State Preserves Advisory Board. They are proposing that the budget be a cost shared item with the State Preserves Advisory Board, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and some of their collaborators. They are looking for a commitment from the Preserves Board of approximately \$5,500 to complete this effort.

(A copy of the proposal as presented by Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation is available in the Department's Record Center.)

Jeff Vonk asked John Pearson to explain where the money would come from.

John Pearson said historically the board has received a research fund to spend annually that has traditionally been between \$25,000 and \$30,000. This is the only source of money that the board has control of, therefore the money would need to come out of that fund.

Jeff Vonk said he was willing to look into seeing if there were other places from within the Department's budget where they could get the money for this project but he could not commit anything.

Neil Bernstein said he felt it was a wonderful idea that is overdue, however if the Board commits a portion of its research budget that is not guaranteed from one year to the next, it would take approximately 20% of that budget and would involve eliminating two or three surveys of potential preserves.

Robin Fortney said she has wanted to move on dedicating some scenic preserves for some time but she is unsure where they would get the money to fund this research.

Neil Bernstein asked why consultants were needed. He said most of the people who work with preserves volunteer their time.

Mark Ackelson said they may be able to get by without consultants but there is at least one person that the Preserves Board might want to have on the committee but because of the nature of their employment, they cannot volunteer.

John Pearson said it is not completely without precedent that the board considers something other than inventory type research. There is a study being done at this time at Glenwood Hospital to determine its suitability as a possible preserve. The money for this study was taken off the top of the budget before considering the applications for research.

Jeff Vonk said it appears as though the schedule for getting started is fairly tight and if the budget is a stumbling block he will try to look for other funds.

Mark Ackelson said once the team has been put together every effort will be made to trim the budget. The worst thing that you can do is to go into a project like this assuming that you will be able to get everybody's time contributed and the other expenses magically taken care of. He said he feels that is one of the reasons this has never been done.

Jeff Vonk asked if the Natural Heritage Foundation would be willing to wait until the April meeting so that the budget issue could be looked into.

Mark Ackelson said they would but it would push the schedule back by three months.

Robin Fortney said if there was an option to take a little out of each year's budget it might be easier.

Mark Ackelson said they would be willing to do that, however they do have an intern lined up that is willing to do a lot of the leg work, for which they need to make a commitment.

Laura Jackson asked Mark Ackelson if they were considering particular regions and would it be part of the final package.

Mark Ackelson said they do not intend to include suggestions for potential preserves in the final package but suggested that once the criteria was developed the Preserves Board could field test it on areas they are considering. He said he would expect that one of the criteria would have to be a thorough evaluation of an area being proposed as a scenic preserve.

Neil Bernstein asked if the distribution expenses could be shaved due to the fact that most of them have email capabilities.

Mark Ackelson said they are willing to sit down to discuss the budget but it was important to remember that the distribution costs include a person's time, putting together graphics, and the appearance before other Commissions and Boards.

Kathy Gourley said the money that the Board will potentially get for next year's budget is not actually available until July, therefore there is no money available at this time. She asked if there would be a problem with waiting for the funds to become available.

Mark Ackelson said they would simply use the money received from the Preserves Board at the tail end of the project.

Jeff Vonk said, as Board member he felt it was important to look outside of their \$25,000 because unless it is stretched out over a number of years it will most likely not be feasible. In addition the Board should not bank on getting the money next year because the State is anticipating another round of budget cuts.

Motion was made by Jeff Vonk to table the issue until the April meeting to give the Department the opportunity to look at the realm of potential sources for funding this type of effort.

Tim Sproul said he didn't feel that the Board would know any more in April than they do now.

Jeff Vonk said that by April he would be able to tell the Board whether or not he was able to find the money in this year's budget.

Laura Jackson suggested using criteria that has been published for scenic designations in other agencies and states and finding how difficult it would be to adapt the language to Iowa's landscape.

Mark Ackelson said they were willing to dedicate funds to get the process going but there is no rush to get the project done. The important thing is whether or not

the Board felt it was something they wanted to do and whether they would like to work together with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation to accomplish it.

Jeff Vonk asked if Mark Ackelson would be willing to look at the rules that have been developed in other states.

Mark Ackelson said that the National Park Service has access to some resources that they are willing to share with the team.

The motion to table was seconded by Laura Jackson. Motion carried unanimously.

Tabled Until April

SLAYTON FARMS ROUND BARN

Rod Scott, Project Director for the Hardin County Historic Preservation Commission distributed a package of information to the Board members. He said this barn is the only surviving major structure of a 180 acre, turn of the century, horse operated farmstead. Being the only structure left it is under increasing pressure from the migration of urbanization from the community. The building was listed on the Nation Register of Historic Places in 1999 and it received the designation of one of the 11 most endangered Iowa National Register of Historic Places listed properties in the year 2000. The barn was built in 1914 and 1915 and was constructed of structural clay tiles, which near as they can tell, originated from the Johnston Brothers Tile Works in Fort Dodge. The unique designation of this round barn is that it is called a true Iowa round barn. This designation came out of the intensive survey conducted by Dr. Lowell Soike, who was the author of the book, "Without Right Angles", which was the book that tried to document all of the round or multisided barns in Iowa. He said the reason they believe that this barn was one of 16 round barns constructed by the Johnston Brother's Tile Works is because of the orientation of the bricks. The barn is 202 foot around and 67 feet high at the silo. The gable break in the roof and the haymow floor are both supported with a very unique laminated ring structure. There are no photographic records of the farmstead but they were very fortunate last summer to talk to the last surviving member of the family who were the first family to rent the farmstead from the original homesteading family in 1929. He said they are extremely concerned because due to budget cuts last year they lost the REAP grant. Therefore they have been stuck with having to make do with an emergency stabilization grant of the roofing structure and a small grant from Silos and Smokestacks – National Heritage Area that was supposed to match the REAP grant. The barn was donated to the Historic Preservation Commission of Hardin County by the homeowners who live behind the barn along with 5/8ths of an acre. Their concern for the future is that political winds come and go and there may be a day when the county may wish to get rid of the barn. Their goal for this facility is to create a heritage education experience. All of the original dairy equipment is still in the barn and is from the Loudon Manufacturing Company of

Fairfield Iowa. He said this barn was built at the end of the last round barn building cycle. This barn is located within the boundaries of the Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage area and as such is automatically to be included with the telling of the story of Iowa's contribution to America's agriculture.

(A copy of the packet of information distributed to the Board is available in the Department's Record Center.)

John Pearson asked if the restoration work had been completed.

Rods Scott said the planking, hay mow, and framing for the door, have been completed, and the door itself is scheduled for next summer. The roof is currently covered in tarpaper and tarps until funding can be found to finish the shingling.

Laura Jackson asked if they had local support.

Rod Scott said there are a few in the community that are adamantly against the restoration and would like to have it torn down but there are also people, including a dead end farm family that has donated \$20,000 of their own money and are scheduled for another \$20,000 or \$30,000 next year, that are in favor of this project. There is a lot of interest from the school system. This barn is located one and a half miles from the Calkins Campus Interpretive Center which belongs to the County Conservation Board. In the future, if the Historic Preservation Commission was disbanded or for any other reason was unable to properly manage the property the County Conservation Board has indicated that they would be willing to take over.

John Pearson said that Mr. Scott indicated he thought preserve status would help keep the property in public hands and he wanted to clarify that preserve status protects the structure no matter who owns it. Therefore it could change hands and the conservation easement would transfer with it.

Neil Bernstein said that the current Board members had not been through the historical preserve process and asked John Pearson and Daryl Howell what else the Historic Preservation Commission would need to do before the Preserves Board could make a decision.

John Pearson said he and Daryl would have to look to Kathy Gourley, Shirley Schermer, and the archeological and historical component in the long-range plan for guidance.

Kathy Gourley said one of the requirements for preserve status is that a management plan be established.

Rod Scott asked if it would be all right to use the management plan for Montauk Historical Preserve as a guide.

Kathy Gourley said she is not sure whether or not Montauk has a management plan as a state preserve. She said she is certain that it has one through the State Historical Society but Montauk was dedicated at a time when a management plan was not a requirement for dedication.

He welcomed the Board members to visit their web site and said there was a contribution form available there as well.

Scott Moats said that Mr. Scott had mentioned that there were maybe 90 round barns still remaining around the state; he asked if they would have the guidance they need to determine whether or not this structure merits preserve status.

Kathy Gourley said the fact that it is on the National Register of Historic Places means that it has a level of significance and integrity. She said that Mr. Scott said there were approximately 90 round barns but only 11 of them were clay tile.

Rod Scott said clay tile is extremely rare but he said he would be willing to do additional research to see if he can come up with an estimate of surviving clay tile round barns.

Daryl Howell said he would be willing to mail Mr. Scott a biological management plan that he could use as a guide.

Information Only

UPDATES ON POTENTIAL PRESERVES

Banister-McGregor Update

John Pearson gave a GIS presentation of aerial photographs that had been taken over the years of four of the preserve candidates. The core area of Banister-McGregor Woods in 1939 appeared to be grazed woodland, the 1953 photograph showed a gravel pit outside of the core area appears to have become more dense with trees as though the grazing had been discontinued. In 1990 the core area had come into its modern configuration, where the woods have become dense and the gravel pit has become overgrown with trees.

Baylor Property Update

Photographs of Baylor Property in Fremont County in 1938 showed that the ridge is more open prairie and the bowl shows the possibility of agricultural uses. The 1960 photograph shows that the agricultural use has been discontinued and shrubs and small trees are beginning to encroach on the bowl area. In 1992, the photograph shows that the prairie on the south-facing slope is still very open but

the prairies on the north facing slope and the north-south ridge have become very reduced in size.

Neil Bernstein asked if Susanne Hickey, from the Nature Conservancy was working on doing the surveys and the management plan for this area.

John Pearson said Susanne Hickey is presently writing the management plan for the property in consultation with the owner. He said there is also a biological survey being conducted for reptiles and amphibians, which should be available to the Board around the end of June.

Neal Bernstein asked if the Preserves Board was looking at the bowl area only for preserve status.

John Pearson said what is actually nominated for preserve has yet to be identified.

Delong Woodland Update

John Pearson said the earliest photograph of the Delong Woodland that is available is from 1956, which shows that the property was made up primarily bur oak woods. Karl Delong acquired the property in 1973, at which time he began managing it as a natural area with an oak savanna and prairie in mind. In 1988, the wooded grassland has filled in with young elm, ash, and black cherry trees. Dr. Delong has done a lot of tree clearing to prevent trees from encroaching into the wet swale. The picture from 1992 shows the area pretty much as it is today.

Hartman Reserve Update

John Pearson said a photograph of the Hartman Reserve in 1937 there was forest land all along the north facing bluff. He said the portion of the property being nominated as a preserve has not changed visually over time but the area around the reserve has changed dramatically. There has been a lot of suburban development right up to the boundaries of the reserve, including a school and the nature center.

Neil Bernstein thanked John Pearson for the work he did on the presentation. He said there had been discussion on making a decision regarding preserve status for the Hartman Reserve at this meeting. However the Board had received Dave Conrad's report and the GIS information since the last meeting. He asked if Vern Fish knew where the plot stakes are.

Vern Fish said there were approximately 38 of them, of which some had disappeared. However the majority of them are still out there but are difficult to find because the original notes are difficult to decipher.

Neil Bernstein asked if there had ever been an archaeological survey done.

Vern Fish said he is not aware of any being done.

Vern Fish said that John Pearson had conducted 50 micro one-meter surveys and asked if the information from those surveys was catalogued somewhere.

John Pearson said he had not prepared a report for this meeting but he did not find any surprises. The species found were those expected to be found in a natural area.

Neil Bernstein said the Board has a herbaceous list, woody plant list, vertebrate list, and a management plan for the preserve. There is a report on the geology and soil survey. He asked if there was anything else the Board needed to make their decision.

John Pearson said he and Vern had discussed putting the management plan that has been prepared into the format that is used for the Preserves Board.

Vern Fish said he had received copies of other management plans and was willing to transfer their plan into the Preserve Board's format for their convenience but was reluctant to do put any energy into the project unless he knew it was a necessity. He said the final management plan would also need to be approved by the Black Hawk County Conservation.

Neil Bernstein said that Jeff Vonk had mentioned at the last meeting that he would check into whether or not the Board needed to give public notice of their consideration of an area for preserve status.

Jeff Vonk said he did not yet have an answer to that question. He asked John Pearson to check with the legal staff to get their opinion.

Laura Jackson asked if this was a concern for this preserve in particular or for all proposed preserves.

Jeff Vonk said he felt it was a good thing to do for all proposed preserves.

Neil Bernstein asked Vern Fish to provide the updated management plan to the Board members no later than March 15th so that they would have time to review it prior to the April meeting.

Rock Island Preserve and Proposed Addition Update

Neil Bernstein said that the Board members had received a letter from Diana Horton that expressed her impressions of the addition and her support of adding the new county property to the Rock Island Preserve. They have also received a draft supplemental environmental impact statement for the Highway 100 extension, a botanical survey, the final report on the lepidoptera from Dennis Schlicht, and a summary prepared by John Pearson and Daryl Howell of all of the

studies that had been conducted in the area. They have also received a report prepared by Earth Tech on the ornate box turtle and Blanding's turtle survey done for the Iowa Highway 100 in Linn County. According to John and Daryl's summary the plants, butterflies, amphibians, and reptiles have been looked at for the entire corridor. In addition Terry VanDeWalle has looked at the mammals and will be surveying the birds this spring, in the existing preserve. Mr. VanDeWalle has also done some surveys for amphibians and reptiles on the proposed area known as the "Byssus Skipper Prairie" and will be surveying other sites in the proposed addition in the spring. He said according to the completed surveys the existing preserve still has a good number of native plants with only a small percentage of non-native plants. It continues to have a good population of butterflies and reptiles.

Jeff Vonk said he is looking forward to the reports on the surveys being completed in June or July. He suggested putting all of the results from the various surveys into a GIS presentation if possible.

John Pearson said he expects that those reports will be available for the July meeting.

Dan Beichler said they anticipate doing additional plant and small animal surveys on the addition. He said with regard to the management plan they have divided the proposed addition into 15 sub zones, and will be providing an aerial photo of each.

John Pearson asked when the additional studies would be completed and the results available.

Dan Beichler said he was anticipating have it done in the spring and hopes to have the results to the Department by June 30.

Jeff Vonk said at the last meeting the Board discussed what type of protection that preserve status gave to a property. He said he had asked Mike Smith of the Attorney General's office and he handed out copies of the AG's opinion which stated that it would take an enactment of state law to enable land in a state preserve to be converted to a public highway. This protection would not apply to a county-owned preserve unless it was dedicated as part of the state preserve system.

(A copy of the memo from Michael H. Smith, Assistant Attorney General is available in the Department's Record Center.)

Neil Bernstein asked if the Department had received any information from the Federal Highway Commission as to whether or not this property is 4F.

John Pearson said the Department is still waiting to hear from Federal Highway Administration whether or not the preserve deserves 4F status.

Jeff Vonk said the Highway Commission had been doing some rescheduling due to their budget problems. He asked if the Highway 100 project was involved.

Dan Beichler said he was not sure.

Banister-McGregor Property Update

Neil Bernstein said he had a conversation with Wade Weiss from the Greene County Engineers office and learned that the proposed road would go through the middle of the Banister McGregor property, which has been proposed for preserve status.

Jeff Vonk asked where the county was in the process for the road.

Neil Bernstein said there is currently an injunction against the road, however he was told by Mr. Weiss that they were exploring the possibility of reversing it.

Wade Weiss, Greene County Engineer said he would be happy to come to another meeting and give a presentation on where they are in this process. He said an alignment was proposed in the early 1990's as an alternative route to get around the curve in the road known as "Danger Hill" and the Eureka Bridge, which is a structure, which requires improvement. There is an injunction in place at this time but they have hired an attorney to look into that action. They are waiting for a DOT study that is looking at Greene County as to how to proceed with upgrading the segments of the Lincoln Highway that are still in existence. He said as a matter of historical interest, when the road was originally proposed the Eureka Bridge would not have remained, however there is now discussion about saving the bridge, and keeping it on the highway system that would have funds to maintain it. He said the concern has always been for public safety and they are looking at all alternatives.

Neil Bernstein said because the area has been proposed as a preserve, according to the Iowa Code it is the Board's duty is to evaluate the area for preserve status only. They have initiated studies and will continue them.

Wade Weiss said he did not want to get into a race but he hated to see groups being used to carry out a goal that may not be what it started out to be.

John McGregor, landowner of the Banister McGregor property said they have appreciated that many of the Board members have personally visited, and walked the area so that have a reasonable idea as to why they want the property to be dedicated as a preserve.

Bruce Banister, landowner of the Banister McGregor property said this injunction has been in place for over ten years. It is a permanent injunction that has not been challenged. This road project has been kicked around for the last thirty years, and while he realizes that it is a safety issue, why has it not been done before now. He said the existing road does not affect the proposed preserve. He said that the Banisters and the McGregors were conservationists not obstructionists.

Wade Weiss said in order to keep the existing alignment; improvements could possibly involve part of the proposed preserve.

Glenwood Hospital Site Update

Shirley Schermer said Rebecca Johnson has been looking at current and past land use, previous archaeological studies, types of reported archaeological sites and the status of those sites, for the Glenwood State Hospital. She has made a series of recommendations with regard to potential preserve status, which should be available for the Board members in the next week or two. In addition Ms. Johnson and Joe Artz, an OSA/GIS coordinator, are preparing a small GIS portion of the overall study. She suggested that Kathy Gourley, John Pearson, and Daryl Howell might like to review the final draft and make comments prior to it being presented to the entire Board.

Neil Bernstein asked if the information being gathered in this study would be sufficient for the Board to make a decision.

Kathy Gourley said if Ms. Johnson's recommend granting the hospital preserve status the only thing that will be left to do is to put together a management plan.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Neil Bernstein said that John Pearson and Daryl Howell had put together a list of potential sites and studies that need to be done.

Motion was made by Laura Jackson to accept the request for proposals as presented. Seconded by Kathy Gourley.

Kathy Gourley said the limestone church at the base of the hill in the City of Fort Atkinson should be added to the historical studies or studies needed for potential preserves.

John Pearson said he would add it to the list.

Motion carried unanimously.

SURVEY REQUIREMENTS FOR POTENTIAL PRESERVES

Neil Bernstein said the Board has discussed how much information is necessary before a decision can be made about a potential preserve. With the fiscal year beginning in July it causes the contracts for surveys to begin in July as well. Often times the surveys have to be carried over until the following year to collect the spring data. This creates a two-year process for gathering information before a decision can be made on a proposed botanical preserve.

Robin Fortney asked if there were any criteria for botanical preserves as to what is needed for dedication.

John Pearson said the long-range plan that was developed by the Preserves Board discusses criteria for plant communities. The board looks for a coverage of types of areas and then looks to get a good example of that type once it is identified.

Neil Bernstein said according to a species area curve, while you will pick up additional new species by conducting a lengthy survey, you are not really increasing your accuracy that much more. He said the Board should be able to develop some sort of methodology to determine the types and species in the area without doing an exhaustive inventory. He said he believes it is the direction the Board needs to move in order to avoid dragging out the decisions for a long period of time and being faced with uncertainty about funding or throwing the funding source back on the people proposing the property.

Laura Jackson said whether the species list is done through expensive and exhaustive surveys or rapid assessment, the question remains as to whether or not it is good quality.

Neil Bernstein said in the case of the Banister McGregor Woods, John Pearson went out and did some preliminary plots and Don Farrar gave his assessment of the area, and many of the Board members have seen the property along with the District Forester who gave his assessment, now the Board is asking for a more formal floristic survey. He asked when would it be enough.

Jeff Vonk said when there is no controversy surrounding the dedication of a preserve a walk through might be enough, however because of the potential controversy that surrounds the dedication of Banister McGregor Woods as a preserve, he believes that it is worth the time, for the sake of credibility, to have the formal surveys done before making a decision, which will have to stand the test of the Natural Resource Commission and the Governor.

Robin Fortney asked if all of the surveys are done in a similar fashion.

John Pearson said they are reasonably comparable.

Robin Fortney said it is a little more difficult to convey the value of a natural area to the public and so it is better to be a little more careful.

Laura Jackson said that in the long range plan it states that ideally there would be a range of potential sites for dedication as a preserve from which the Board members could chose. The reality is the Board is not simultaneously considering several sites that are similar in nature.

John Pearson said because the Board has to do one nomination at a time it requires that there be an abstract standard, which is difficult to do. We now have floristic quality index system for the whole state where each species of plant is given a value from one to ten and is meant to be a natural areas evaluation tool. If you have a species list for an area you can calculate the quality index and compare it to some standard. Another criteria needed is a range of reference sites to compare the new candidate sites against. As a result of a study funded by the Board, Dr. Tom Rosburg from Drake University has taken all of the plant species lists from all of the preserves in the system plus numerous other prairies and natural areas and created a grand species list broken out by site. From this they will apply the index to each site and should be able to plot on a chart the constellation of values that is in the preserve system already. This will allow Board members to see where a nomination will fit into the range of values.

Neil Bernstein said he thinks the floristic index will help but asked if they would look at species or communities. A good example is Behrens Pond Preserve probably set aside largely for one species, the blue spotted salamander, but in retrospect it has been found to support another species of salamander, lots of frogs, and now is being identified for some protected plants. As a community it is probably more valuable than it ever was. It is important to keep in mind when looking at species that they are an indicator of the community as a whole.

John Pearson said the floristic index is only a tool, there will be exceptions on both sides. In the case of Behrens Pond, the blue spotted salamander was and probably still is a unique enough organism that you would want to make it a preserve for that reason alone.

Neil Bernstein asked if there was any way to sequester funds to allow the Board to begin a survey in early spring, rather than having them begin at the beginning of the fiscal year when next year's funds become available.

Laura Jackson suggested granting only half of the expected funds in April and save the other half for a round of grants in January.

Jeff Vonk said he did not see any problem with that as long as the funds were obligated within the context of the fiscal year.

Neil Bernstein said when the money is granted in one fiscal year, that report is due by June 30 of the same fiscal year.

Jeff Vonk said the driver behind that is that you want to spend the money within the fiscal year and the funds are distributed on the basis of the report. Therefore administratively there may be a way to operate so that the final check is written based on an early analysis and have the final report submitted the following September.

Laura Jackson said the people who apply for grants to do these studies rely on their reputation. If they do not do a good job on the second part of the study they will not be chosen to receive grants for future studies.

Erwin Klaas from Iowa State University said the National Park Service ran into the same problem years ago, they contracted with the University of Wyoming, Biology Department to take over the administration of the grants and was able to get around the fiscal year funding problem. The Department of Natural Resources already has the capabilities to do that with the Coop Unit at Iowa State University. The Coop Fish and Wildlife Unit is a cooperative venture between the Department, the University, and the Federal Government. At the present time the Department does not pay any overhead.

Neil Bernstein said it sounds as though the Board is interested in exploring a way to sequester some money to be capable of starting a spring survey if necessary.

Laura Jackson said she thinks the Board should try it and start small but the main difficulty she foresees is the potential for confusing the people who are sending in proposals.

Neil Bernstein said the Board never funds all of the proposed projects so there is a safety net there. He suggested starting smaller than \$3,000 to see how it goes.

Neil Bernstein said he has written three articles for the Conservationist, he asked the Board members to review it and if they liked it he would email them the format that he used.

Jeff Vonk congratulated Neil on his effort.

Robin Fortney asked if there were photos already available for the preserves.

Neil Bernstein said he had pictures available for the preserves he had written about. He asked that the rest of the articles be prepared for the next meeting and turn them over to Julie Sparks to be used in the Conservationist.

Jeff Vonk suggested giving the articles that are already done to Julie Sparks so that she can let them know if it was what she had in mind.

Neil Bernstein said at the last meeting it was suggested that there be GIS profiles done for all of the existing preserves. To this end he contacted everyone he knew at colleges and universities that are teaching GIS classes, informing them that this would be a good student project. While there were no commitments at this time the response was good.

Neil Bernstein said the Biennium Report was due to the Governor and Legislature. He asked that the Board members send their comments to Daryl Howell or John Pearson no later than the 10th of January.

Robin Fortney suggested that they add the dates and locations of the meetings scheduled for 2003.

Laura Jackson said that Banister-McGregor was not listed as a potential preserves.

Robin Fortney suggested that they add the preserves that the Board has visited.

BOARD TOUR

The Preserves Advisory Board held a working session after the meeting to discuss formation of a Friends Group for the Preserves, identify volunteer coordinators, and determine which activities are most appropriate for volunteers.

ADJOURNMENT

<i>Motion was made by Robin Fortney to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Scott Moats. Motion carried.</i>

With no further business to come before the State Preserves Advisory Board, Chairperson Neil Bernstein adjourned the meeting at 1:50 PM on January 3, 2003.

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